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The Highlander

Thursday **Dec 11 2025** | Issue 719

INSIDE: HHHS ANNOUNCES NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO PAGE 4 **FREE**

Santa's two little helpers

Alex and Andy Ablett were excited to meet Santa Claus at YMCA Wanakita's Breakfast with Santa event Dec. 6, flanked by parents Ashley and Andrew. More on page 13. *Photo by Steven Sherwood.*

Land Trust buys 200-acre Minden reserve

By Mike Baker

The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) is closing the book on its 20th year in the County with some major news – it will soon be adding a seventh property to its portfolio of protected local nature reserves.

Sheila Ziman, a founding member of the group, said HHLT will close on a 200-acre property north of Minden in late January. The property is being purchased from County-based realtor Andy Campbell for just over $820,000. The money is part of a grant HHLT received from Parks Canada to support its work across the Highlands.

Ziman said the land is located along Plantation Road and serves as a buffer to the Highlands Corridor – a 100,000-hectare strip of unceded Crown, municipal and public land that connects Silent Lake, Kawartha Highlands and Queen Elizabeth II provincial parks. The Highlands Corridor intersects with both the Frontenac Arch and Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative – key natural pathways that allows wildlife to move throughout southern Ontario.

The Campbell lands, as they're currently known, is a major wetland area, with roughly a quarter of the property swamp-like, Ziman said.

"We're always interested in wetlands, especially around Minden, because they act as nature's sponge. They suck up water and then release it slowly… which helps with flooding. Protecting wetlands is a win-win for the community and for nature," Ziman told *The Highlander* Dec. 9.

It's the land trust's second addition this year, following the purchase of the 40-hectare Hadlington Reserve in Highlands East in February. While the Hadlington parcel is inaccessible to the public, with no trail system, Ziman said the new property will be different.

Currently, there's an approximate one-kilometre walking trail at the site, though Ziman said HHLT wants to add more, seeing the reserve as similar to Barnum Creek and Dahl Forest – two of the land trust's other properties, which are popular among hikers.

"One of the most important things to me and the entire

Continued **'Plans'** on page 2

Highlander news

Plans in place for parking lot and trail system

Continued from page 1

HHLT is to get people out on the land… we want to enhance the trail system at this new property, we would like to try to get out onto the wetland in a sustainable way… to see if we can put in a boardwalk or a viewing platform," Ziman said.

"Wetlands are so important and we want to increase people's appreciation and understanding of their value. So, we intend to put a nice system in there and create some good hiking for folks. It's only a 10-to-15-minute drive from Minden," she added.

It will be some time before hikers can be accommodated, Ziman admitted, likely a year at least. The work is time-consuming and expensive, she said. First, there needs to be a management plan conducted to determine what species frequent or reside there, a parking lot will need to be developed and then trails mapped out.

> *"We don't want to get to where southern Ontario is..."*
>
> ***Sheila Ziman***

Ziman said HHLT is looking to raise $75,000 to complete the work.

"We're setting up an endowment fund to try to live as much as possible off the interest of that. We're already at $10,000 raised," Ziman said. "We've had some wonderful support from big environmental foundations and it's really important now for them to see that the community is behind what we do, that our efforts are supported."

Ziman noted a similar effort with the Hadlington property brought in $85,000 in a few months.

Natural features

HHLT board chair Todd Hall said the property is a great addition to the land trust's portfolio.

"The property stands out for its sheer diversity of terrain… 15 unique habitats can be found here, from open meadows, pine plantations, fens, swamps and a sugar maple forest," Hall said. "Our preliminary research already shows the property protects six regionally-rare or at-risk species, including snapping turtles, Midland painted turtles and Black Ash trees."

After conducting a preliminary inventory in September, HHLT found 256 species on the property. It also features a large meadow that has been regularly maintained by the previous owner.

"Grassland habitats like these are rare in Haliburton and are some of the most threatened in Ontario," Hall said. "By continuing to maintain this meadow, HHLT can provide vital habitat for grassland birds like the Meadowlark and Bobolink, whose populations have declined by 67 per cent, on average, since the 1970s."

Ziman visited the property over the summer and marveled at its potential. She sees it becoming a popular self-guided hiking destination once the trails system is complete.

The next step, she said, is to have biologists come in and do some testing through winter. There's also the little detail of coming up with a name – Ziman said HHLT is hoping the public will assist with that.

"There will be a naming contest – our other properties are often named after some type of geographical or historical feature. Barnum Creek was named after the watercourse that flows through the property, Dahl Forest was named after the family who donated it to us," Ziman said.

"There is a creek that flows through this property, but it's unnamed. There's a history of plantations and old farms there," she added, noting the contest will launch early in the new year. Ziman said HHLT also wants to do a guided interpretive walk with the public, likely in late winter.

Now that the deal has been made public, Ziman said she's excited to tell people about the new addition – and why she feels it's so important.

"We don't want to get to where southern Ontario is. They've lost so many wetlands and so much forest that now they're scrambling trying to recreate them," Ziman said. "It's practically impossible to create a wetland once it's gone. They're often thousands of years old. They can't just be replaced. That's why it's so vital that we protect what we have here before it gets lost."

Undisturbed nature on a 200-acre property near Minden that the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust is purchasing. *Submitted.*

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Highlander news

Dysart puts pause on zoning changes

By Mike Baker

Dysart et al council will have to wait until the new year to officially usher in changes to its official plan and zoning bylaw, in a move that will allow sheds and gazebos to be built close to a lake's shoreline.

At a Dec. 9 public meeting, Jeff Iles, the township's director of planning, said the latest proposal will allow gazebos to be placed along the water, providing they're five metres from shore, while storage sheds will be permitted on lots that have a minimum 15 per cent slope incline from the shore to their residence.

A previous amendment to allow saunas within 10 metres of shore was dropped at a Nov. 25 meeting. They will be permitted 20 metres from shore, as per the township's existing policy.

There was also a new provision requiring people to ensure any structure is fitting with the surrounding community.

"To address the visual impacts [to neighbours on the lake], the policy change has been updated to note the design of gazebos and sheds, including the exterior design, shall blend with natural surroundings and be screened from the view from the lake and neighbouring lots," Iles said.

Dysart et al coun. Pat Casey supported deferring the township's official plan and zoning bylaw amendments until January. Pictured with coun. Nancy Wood-Roberts. *File.*

The township received nine new comments, with eight speaking against the change and one in favour. This was in-line with previous public discussions on the file – at a July public meeting, one of 18 speakers supported the plan. Last month, four residents attended a Nov. 25 public meeting to speak in favour of the move, with two against.

A public survey conducted earlier this year drew 735 responses, with 56 per cent in favour of the previous change – which was to allow gazebos within zero metres of shore, a shed within five metres and a sauna within 10 metres. Iles recommended against supporting that amendment.

This week, the planning director advised council a deferral is necessary due to recent changes to Ontario's Planning Act.

"Amendments removed the municipality's approval or right to address exterior design of residential buildings, including accessory buildings. This is something included in the policy today," Iles said Tuesday. "Staff recommend deferral so we can amend those policies."

Iles said that would also give him time to address legal and technical concerns brought forward by Harcourt Park Inc. He said the file would be brought back for a third public meeting in January. Council is currently scheduled to meet Jan. 27.

Council agreed to defer the file.

DYSART ET AL NEWS

Wheels are spinning

The Caboose Community Bike Hub may yet live on, with volunteer coordinator Pamela Marsales informing council she is partnering with the Haliburton Sculpture Forest in applying for a shared summer student position through the Young Canada Works program.

The space opened in April and ran bike-themed activities for all ages through to the end of September. Programming was supported by a $30,000 seed grant through the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Dysart et al council last month said it wouldn't direct any additional money to the caboose for programming next year, though has agreed for Marsales to continue utilizing the space if she can secure funding.

If successful, the student would be shared between the caboose and sculpture forest for 16 weeks next summer. Marsales said they'd find out if they're successful in April. In the meantime, she's fundraising to relaunch the successful 'Slow Spokes' program, where Marsales conducts guided cycling tours through the village for reluctant riders. Marsales said she needs $10,000 to bring it back.

New route for snowmobiles

Snowmobilers will soon have a new way to access Haliburton's downtown corridor.

Council has approved a plan that will see the township staff mark and sign a path from Sam Slick Park by Hal High to the Head Lake Park boat launch, allowing snowmobiles to travel parallel to the walking trail. Snowmobilers will then be directed through the Head Lake parking lot to park in a designated snowmobile parking area beside the welcome centre.

Staff will also create a thoroughfare connecting the Head Lake parking lot to the upper library parking lot on York Street.

In 2020, the township passed a bylaw that restricts road travel for snowmobiles on Highland Street, from Cedar Avenue to Dysart Avenue, and on Maple Avenue from York Street to Mountain Street.

Andrew Wilbee, Dysart's director of parks and recreation, said the necessary stakes and signs for the route will cost around $1,500. No timeline was provided for completion.

Shoreline trimming

Council has directed staff to trim the build-up of tag alder shrubs along the Head Lake walking path after being told by staff that removing them would go against the township's site alteration bylaw.

Coun. Pat Casey said the idea is to tidy up the area, believing that trimming the small tree is no different than cutting brush along municipal roads to maintain site lines.

Coun. Carm Sawyer felt it was a necessary project.

"Even if we thin them out and make them not so bushy, so people can see the lake from the boardwalk," Sawyer said. "In my opinion, when you come into town, it looks like we've let things run wild and simply aren't maintaining it."

CAO Tamara Wilbee said the township has someone on staff with arborist qualifications, so can complete the work in-house. *(Dysart et al briefs compiled by Mike Baker)*

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Highlander news

New HHHS president, CEO starts in March

By Mike Baker

Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) has announced a long-term successor to former president and CEO Veronica Nelson, with Jack Hutchison taking the reins of the organization effective March 30, 2026.

The move was announced by HHHS board chair Irene Odell in a Dec. 5 media release and was described as a homecoming for Hutchison, who has ties to the Highlands region.

While his work history was not fully disclosed, online records show Hutchison has spent 11 years working with the Weeneebayko Area Health Authority, made up of a group of six Indigenous communities across the western James Bay Coast – the past three as senior vice president and chief operating officer.

In 2022, he also spent nine months as vice president of people and culture at Headwaters Health Care Centre in Orangeville.

Reflecting on his new position, Hutchison said he's eager to start with HHHS.

"I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to return home to Haliburton County and serve our community. HHHS has dedicated, passionate teams and a strong commitment to high-quality, compassionate care," Hutchison said. "I look forward to working together to support staff, strengthen services, build a sustainable future for health care in the Highlands, and deliver our vision of being the model of excellence in rural healthcare."

Jack Hutchison will join HHHS as the organization's new president and CEO in March. *Submitted.*

The announcement came three months to the day since Nelson vacated her position, on Sept. 5, to rejoin Ross Memorial Hospital in Lindsay as its president and CEO. She spent 22 months at the helm of HHHS, joining in December 2023 after 24 years on staff at the Lindsay hospital.

Since Nelson's departure, HHHS' chief nursing executive, Jennifer Burns West, has served as interim president and CEO. HHHS did not say whether Burns West would return to her previous role.

HHHS says Hutchison was the standout choice, bringing extensive experience in capital redevelopment, technology enablement and master planning, strengthening HHHS' capacity for future growth. The organization has applied to relocate and expand its long-term care services at the Minden Health Hub, potentially paving the way for a substantial redevelopment of the Haliburton site.

"We are thrilled to welcome Jack to HHHS. His deep experience in system transformation, his proven ability to lead complex operations, and his meaningful connection to this area make him an exceptional fit for our organization," Odell said. "We look forward to the vision and passion Jack will bring as we strengthen and expand care for our community."

HHHS declined to answer several follow-up questions from *The Highlander*, with spokesperson Lauren Ernst stating more information will be released closer to Hutchison's start date.

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Highlander news

Minden's wastewater system filling up

By Lisa Gervais

The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) has told Minden Hills council if the township's population grows, it may have to expand its water and wastewater system within the next 25 years.

Jason Younker, in presenting a water and wastewater rate study Nov. 27, said "the growth potential in Minden is high." He said if the town's population booms, "expansion of the water and wastewater system will likely need to be done" by 2050.

Younker noted the population had increased over the past 25 years, with the rate of increase from 2016 to 2021 being 14.5 per cent - about 2.9 per cent per year.

He said any expansions would be "quite pricy" and OCWA did not include it in forecasted capital expenditures for the systems. He estimated "many tens of millions of dollars. That is something to keep in mind, but we are recommending 'I and I'."

'I and I' refers to managing inflow and infiltration. That means things such as preventing unwanted entry of stormwater, groundwater, or snowmelt into a sanitary sewer system. It also means eliminating surface water from sources such as downspouts or storm drains. Other examples are stopping pipe cracks, leaks, or faulty joints.

The rate study is about ensuring the municipality charges enough money to pay for services.

Younker said the township now provides water to about 628 customers and wastewater to about 593.

The current billing structure is a combination of flat fees billed quarterly and metered rates based on a single rate per cubic metre of treated water for every water and sewer connection.

He estimated revenue from water at more than $630,000-a-year, and wastewater at more than $718,000 annually. Water expenditures were at just under $500,000 and wastewater just over $1 million.

OCWA further estimated the township needs $4.6m for the water system and $3.9m for the wastewater system between 2025 to 2050.

Younker said the closing 2024 water reserve balance is $1,858,081, and rate increases of two per cent per year for the next 25 years will result in an increase to the reserve fund balance.

The closing 2024 wastewater reserve balance is $1,123,646 and rate increases of two per cent per year for the entirety of the planning period results in a consistent decrease in the wastewater reserve fund.

For the water system, he said the township is well within capacity. He said they could double the population and still have extra capacity.

However, that is not the case for wastewater.

"In terms of dry weather flows, it seems to be fine. In terms of the wet weather flows, experienced in the spring melt, there do seem to be times when the system might need bypassing."

However, he said they are still below the 80 per cent average flow mark where a sewage capacity upgrade might be recommended.

The Ontario Clean Water Agency has done a water and wastewater rate study for Minden Hills. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

OCWA offered a number of recommendations: such as increasing flat fees; shifting revenue to wastewater; rate increases; rate increases with yearly rate changes; or maintaining the existing rate structure.

They concluded: "The water and wastewater systems are presently in a satisfactory financial position, with rate structures that may benefit from changes to balance out future projected financial reserves. Action should continue to be taken to address wastewater capacities (I & I reduction), with consideration given to the implementation of a planning process for a plant expansion."

Council took no action on the report but CAO Cynthia Fletcher said OCWA will be presenting further information based on the recent discussion with council at the Dec. 15 budget meeting

Howling for holiday donations

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHSF) is calling on County residents to join its recently-established wolf pack over the holidays, all in the name of raising money for the Haliburton hospital and Minden Health Hub.

The organization released its holiday stuffy in late November, introducing Timber the Wolf to supporters in the Highlands. The Foundation has been selling stuffed toys over the festive period annually since 1998, raising more than $165,000.

The stuffed toys cost $30 and are available at the HHHSF office in Haliburton, Todd's Independent, BMO Haliburton, Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve, Minden CIBC and Foodland in Minden and Haliburton.

As is tradition, hospital staff voted on the name, with four people each picking Timber, Klodt Wong said. *(Mike Baker)*

HHHSF board chair David Blodgett and executive director Melanie Klodt Wong show off the Foundation's latest festive mascot, Timber the Wolf. *Photo submitted.*

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Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

The Dorset Fire Hall is slated for replacement by 2030 in Algonquin Highlands' new asset management plan. *File.*

New Dorset fire hall on radar

By Mike Baker

Algonquin Highlands council has officially adopted its new five-year asset management plan, with the preparing consultant giving the township rave reviews for its recent long-term financial planning.

Benjamin Koczwarski, from London-based consultant UrbanRe, said the municipality owns assets worth approximately $76.7 million. With the township boasting an eight-figure portfolio, Koczwarski said an asset management plan will play a key role as council and municipal staffers prioritize facility, equipment and infrastructure repairs and replacement over the next decade. The plan provides an outlook through 2035.

"The asset management plan is not a budget – it is a planning document intended to inform the regular budgeting and project planning processes for the township." Koczwarski said. "It's not intended to be an immediate plan the township must follow, but something that gives you the information and perspective you need so that when you're going into budget time, you can look at what the needs are year-over-year and make sure you're covering all the bases."

Koczwarski noted Algonquin Highlands is growing at a faster rate than the provincial average.

"That typically means there's a growing need for additional investment in public assets. Generally, you need to increase the type of, or number of assets, or improve assets for that growing population," he said.

Since 2020, the township has invested $3.52 million annually through its capital budget, with Koczwarski saying that needs to be slightly increased to reach the $3.61 million he's recommending council dedicate each year until 2035.

Broken down by department, to replace all existing municipal assets the township would need to spend $34.47 million on its road network (44.92 per cent of the spend), $11.8 million on facilities (15.37 per cent), $10.73 million on bridges and culverts (13.98 per cent), $9.05 million on its fleet (11.79 per cent), $6.66 million on land improvements (8.67 per cent), and $4.04 million on machinery and equipment (5.27 per cent).

Koczwarski said the township's roads are in "fairly good condition." He anticipates the township will need to allocate $618,000 to maintain about 110 kilometres of the network in 2026. He credited council for prioritizing two recent major rehabilitation projects on North Shore Road and Big Hawk Lake Road, with both expected to begin next year.

The township owns "a fantastic diversity of facilities" Koczwarski said, with three fire halls, three community halls, the township office, public works garage and municipal airport.

He said he met with staff in October to discuss priority projects at municipal buildings, with eight buildings identified as problems. On top of the $1 million roof replacement of the airport hangars and $250,000 HVAC upgrades at the Dorset Recreation Centre, approved for next year, Koczwarski said there are accessibility improvements required at the Stanhope and Oxtongue Lake community centres.

The Dorset Fire Hall, also known as Station 60, needs replacing by 2030 at an estimated cost of $6 million.

"That facility is reaching the end of its useful life. To maintain a healthy and safe work environment for fire department staff, to uphold the equipment and fleet housed in the fire hall, it's time for you to start thinking about potential replacements," Koczwarski said.

The consultant said the township owns five bridges and culverts, which are all in good-to-very-good condition. Koczwarski recommended investing $80,000 in 2026 and building in an additional $107,000 each year to help with expensive replacements down the road.

Priorities under land improvements include new parking lots, upgrades at landfills and the Stanhope Municipal Airport, a rebuild of the log chute, and expanding the municipality's docks and landings.

About 25 per cent of the municipal fleet is past its expected useful life, Koczwarski said. He recommended the township invest almost $590,000 upgrading its vehicles in 2026, with another $5.2 million required by 2035.

It was a similar story with equipment – about 30 per cent of the tools staffers utilize are past their expected useful life. He recommended council invest about $3.8 million addressing the shortfall over the next decade.

Koczwarski said the past two terms of council have done a good job investing in the municipality's future.

"Over the past five years, you have been spending very close to the amount you should on capital projects, which is a very good sign," he said. "The township also has reserve funds totalling $7.28 million, which is another good sign you have the resources needed to carry out these projects."

Council officially adopted the asset management plan Nov. 20 – a key detail, Koczwarski notes as some federal and provincial revenue streams only accept grant applications from township's with formal long-term outlooks.

Highlander people

Buncho and Really, with Karen Koehler, show off their medals from the recent International Federation of Sledding Sports 2025 Dryland Championships. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

Perseverance pays off on golden run

By Lisa Gervais

At the age of 52 – and after 21 years of competing in harness dog sports – Algonquin Highlands' Karen Koehler recently won her first-ever gold and silver medal at an international competition held in the U.S.

Koehler took part in the International Federation of Sledding Sports 2025 Dryland Championships in Minocqua, Wisconsin in late October – capturing her first world podiums.

And she did it without her beloved dog Zillion, who passed away this past spring unexpectedly at the age of three-and-a-half years.

Instead, Buncho, at nine, led the charge to gold in canicross - where the trainer and dog run together with the dog out front pulling the trainer along. And, Really, who just made the age qualifying limit, helped with the silver, in bikejoring, where dogs run in front of a bike, pulling it forward using bikejoring equipment.

"When I lost Zillie, I actually didn't know if I would be able to do very much at worlds, but I applied for all the classes," Koehler said in a recent interview at her home.

She started training with Mighty for canicross, but the dog's back was hurting. She had never used Buncho for the discipline, thinking he would not like it. "He's a very fast dog; he loves to bike. He loves skiing." She worried he would want to be speedier on the running course.

But she started training with him, anyway, doing a slow build. "We were just at the right distance when we got to worlds in our training, 3.7 kilometres.

"Then you get to worlds, and you've got these obscene hills." Koehler said it was fine going up, but coming down another story. There was mud and she feared she was going to crash. But she stayed up, thanks to strenuous training. "So, I stayed on my feet. I do not know how. Half my body was that way, I was sliding."

On the penultimate day, she started bikejoring first, which gave her an idea of what the course would be like. That garnered the silver. It was day two of canicross, and she and Buncho were able to retain their lead for gold. All along, she had to protect a hamstring she injured years ago.

"It was something. I was so proud of myself. On the podium, I was blubbering. And they played the Canadian national anthem. It was just so crazy. Never had a world podium; the same day I had the silver and gold. It was just such a dream come true."

She said between the challenging course, the biking, her age, and being mindful of her hamstring, "I was so happy with how everything came together. I had to work for it. I had to be so careful with my training."

She was also proud of Buncho, at nine, and having come back from an injury two years ago.

"I was not sure if he would have to retire, but he has told me, clearly, he does not want to. He is perfect for where I am now. My first dogs that lived to 16 and 18 told me very clearly when they were done. It was just a sad look one day when we harnessed up, like I am not into this anymore, and that is when we stopped. They won't run if they don't want to. And when they want to run you know it. It is in their whole body and manner."

Editorial opinion

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Good morning

By Mike Baker

You know, the older I get the more I find I'm appreciating the little things in life. Or at least trying to.

Wednesday morning was a good example – waking shortly before 7 a.m., I was dismayed to find Mother Nature had been so kind as to dump a metric ton of snow on my driveway. I was only upset because I had been out the prior evening, just before bed, convinced I was the smartest guy on my street for doing a pre-clear.

Now, granted, while I only had one metric ton to shift, my neighbours probably had closer to two. That improved my mood marginally – like I said, making an effort to appreciate the little things.

My perspective changed completely when my two-year-old daughter awoke from her slumber. This is her first year really noticing things – and snow is a favourite. After a quick cuddle, she immediately sprinted to the living room window and slapped the glass with excitement. Not 10 minutes earlier, I had been stood in the exact same position with a totally different feeling.

Now, it was around 7:30 a.m., so the responsible adult inside me perhaps should have nipped this in the bud right away. But when Emma said she wanted to go outside to play, I found myself saying 'OK'. It's funny how one off-the-cuff decision can snowball into bigger and better things – pun intended.

So, I didn't spend my early morning shoveling like I should have. Instead, I spent it building a snowman with my daughter. It wasn't going to win any awards, but she was happy with it. So too were my neighbour's kids, who came over to lend a hand, feral with excitement after they were granted a snow day from school.

I watched as my daughter made friends, extending her little community. It got me thinking about how important it is to be flexible, to live in the moment. It would have been easy for me to follow our usual routine – diaper change, breakfast, get dressed and brush teeth, then either read a book or watch TV before daycare with grandma and grandpa.

Instead, we now have weekend plans with fresh acquaintances. My daughter has a new favourite memory to obsess about.

With the holidays quickly approaching, it can be easy to get bogged down with the daily grind, stressed about all the Christmas shopping and million other things you still need to do before the big day. It can be overwhelming.

For half an hour on Wednesday, though, I forgot about all of that. Getting to enjoy that time outdoors improved my mood tremendously – I even managed to shovel the snow without scowling.

My point is, even when it feels like you have no time, that everything is closing in around you, there are many ways to ground and rejuvenate yourself – sometimes it's as simple as saying yes when you really don't want to. Smile in the face of the storm.

If you're looking for a quick pick-me-up, there are limitless opportunities at your fingertips in Haliburton County. Now that Old Man Winter has delivered a fresh sheet of the white stuff, there's a playground right outside your front door.

I'm always amazed by the sheer number of activities going on up here over the holidays. The Highlands community knows how to do Christmas right – and that includes making sure the less-fortunate are taken care of too. Each of our food banks are accepting donations for their Christmas hamper programs until next week.

Whether you've already enjoyed festive staples such as the Haliburton and Minden Santa Claus parades, Heritage Ballet's recent production of *The Nutcracker*, Dysart et al's Jolly Jog, Christmas in the Village at the Minden Hills Community Centre, or Breakfast with Santa at YMCA Wanakita, there's still plenty of time to make more memories.

Friday night is Haliburton Rotary's annual Christmas skate and community party at A.J. LaRue Arena and the Haliburton Legion. It's also the rescheduled tree lighting in Dorset. Saturday there's a winter yule market in Minden, and Sunday is the Santa Claus parade in Wilberforce.

Get lost in the magic of Christmas – whether by yourself, with family, or friends. You probably won't regret it. Heck, you might even enjoy it.

MIND BODY MATTERS

Feels good to feel good

By Gail Holness

Yoga says start with your spine.

Do you suffer from headaches? Are your neck, shoulders, hips, knees, or feet constantly aching? Do you sometimes feel older than your age suggests?

In yoga, there's a saying: "you are only as young and healthy as your spine is strong and supple." If you've ever experienced back pain, you know the truth in those words. Proper posture is key to feeling youthful—and yoga can be your fountain of youth.

Let's explore the basics of good standing posture through a foundational yoga pose called Mountain Pose, or Tadasana, also known as the posture of balance.

Start by coming to a standing position. Take a moment to scan your body. Notice how you feel—what feels comfortable, and what doesn't. Acknowledge the sensations but don't get stuck on them. Just observe; they will shift.

Now, look down at your feet. Are your toes pointing straight ahead, or do they angle inward or outward? Are your feet aligned, or is one slightly in front of the other? Gently bring your feet side by side, with toes pointing forward. Try lifting your big toes off the ground—this may feel easy or challenging. Just notice the response in your body.

Let's move up to your knees. If your knees are locked, gently bend them and observe where they go. Do they collapse inward toward the big toe (knock-kneed), or splay out toward the little toe (bow-legged)? In Mountain Pose, we aim for the knees to bend directly over the middle toes. This may be a small adjustment, but its effects can be profound. Don't worry if it doesn't happen perfectly at first—yoga is a practice, not perfection.

Now, bring your awareness to your hips. Are they pushed forward in front of your knees or sagging behind? Try to stack your hips directly over your knees and ankles, forming one long line down the sides of your legs. Again, notice any shifts or changes in sensation? Proper alignment in the lower body can dramatically improve how the rest of your body feels.

Next, gently engage your pelvic floor—imagine performing a subtle kegel—and draw your lower belly in toward your spine. This action supports the lower back and lifts the ribcage, creating space between the vertebrae. Feel how this creates both strength and lightness in your stance.

Now, to the upper body: lift your shoulders up toward your ears, then roll them back and down. Draw the shoulder blades gently together, opening your chest and allowing for fuller, easier breaths.

Finally, let's correct the position of your head. Many of us carry our heads forward from hours spent on phones or tablets. Tuck your chin slightly and bring your head back so your ears align over your shoulders. Even a 15-degree forward tilt can add up to 27 pounds of pressure on your cervical spine—enough to trigger chronic headaches.

And there you have it: Mountain Pose.

You're now standing with full awareness, grounded, aligned, and energized. That's yoga—not just movement, but mindfulness. And it feels good to feel good.

Editorial opinion

LETTER

Leave natural food alone

Dear editor,

As the letter in the Dec. 4 edition of *The Highlander*, titled 'Public interest and safety' pointed out, there are already safeguards in place to protect public interest.

Just look for the natural product number, or homeopathic medicine number, indicating the product is authorized for sale in Canada, is safe and effective, is manufactured without contamination, or incorrect ingredients. So, why the need for more regulations that will make these natural products harder to access for the public?

There are already safeguards in place. The public does not need more government restrictions and red-tape for natural products that are beneficial by labelling them "therapeutic" and subjecting them to more scrutiny. The system has been working safely up until now.

I hope that people will support Bill C-224 and protect the public's rights to healthcare choices without further government regulation.

Darlene Buckingham
Tory Hill

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

Vivien Mausz sent this photo of Evening Grosbeaks enjoying some seed.

HUMANS OF HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS

Haliburton's allure inspired full-time move

By Susan Tromanhauser

Her youthful appearance and welcoming smile belie her age, but Maggie DeLaire has over 20 years of service as a pharmacy assistant with Shoppers Drug Mart.

She began her career in her hometown of Peterborough, but her experience, knowledge and approachable manner became a much-needed commodity and DeLaire soon found herself being loaned out to neighbouring pharmacies across the region. It was not unexpected when DeLaire was dispatched to Haliburton's Highland Street franchise for a few months-but after two years, DeLaire has no intention of leaving. She fell in love with the customers and the "vibe of the town. A place where everyone knows your name."

When DeLaire first arrived in Haliburton she resided at the Bonnie View Inn during the week and drove home to Peterborough on the weekends. She enjoyed staying at the resort on Lake Kashagawigamog but found it difficult living out of her suitcase and packing up every few days. When the decision was made to stay in Haliburton, she needed a more suitable, permanent place to live.

She was surprised at the cost of rentals in the area. "Who can afford this and still have a life?" Her financial philosophy is that one cheque a month should be for living expenses, (rent, hydro, heat) and the other cheque for savings and lifestyle. The cost of a rental in the Haliburton area was incongruous with her philosophy. DeLaire speaks from experience as she herself is a landlord, owning a home she rents out in Peterborough. The cost of rentals in the larger city of Peterborough is much cheaper than Haliburton.

While she was not successful finding appropriate accommodation in Haliburton, determined to stay in the area, she found a suitable place in Bancroft. To DeLaire, the allure of Haliburton is worth the 45-minute drive.

In the time DeLaire has been in Haliburton, she has seen the owner-pharmacists change several times. They have been from big cities with family responsibilities and must come to the store two-to-three times each week. Without being able to find appropriate housing to move their family to the area, this soon wears on the pharmacist and they sell to a replacement. Now the longest serving assistant, DeLaire remains a constant at the Haliburton franchise.

As a pharmacy assistant, it is DeLaire's job to aid the pharmacist, but most importantly, do what she likes best - focus on the customers. As her tenure at the Haliburton pharmacy lengthens, she has not identified any health trends overall in Haliburton customers but has noticed people who live together seem to have the same medications. She surmises it is because they usually have the same diet and lifestyle.

What DeLaire loves most about Haliburton matches her lifestyle, enjoying the outdoors, fishing and camping. In the village of Haliburton, her favourite thing to do is walk down the street and chat with customers or others she knows. It was on such a stroll one day when she ran into someone she knew from years ago. That chance meeting rekindled their relationship and they now have adopted two puppies together.

Maggie DeLaire is still blown away by Haliburton. *Submitted.*

Another sign Haliburton was meant to be for DeLaire.

What the HALIBURTON PODCAST

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Highlander outdoors

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

The Highlander will not be publishing
Dec. 25, 2025 and Jan. 1, 2026

The Highlander Staff are taking a well earned break.
Our office will be closed Dec. 19, 2025 - Jan. 5, 2026.

Thank you to all of our advertisers, readers and supporters, we hope you have a festive Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

TheHighlander

Sir Sam's Ski/Ride reopens for its 2025/26 season this weekend, Dec. 13. *File.*

Sir Sam's season kicking into gear

By Mike Baker

Dave Bishop is officially in countdown mode as Sir Sam's Ski/Ride edges closer to reopening for the 2025/26 winter season.

Slopes at the Haliburton County landmark will be slick for opening day Dec. 13, Bishop said, with at least two runs, potentially three expected to be in operation this weekend. It will mark the beginning of Sir Sam's 61st season, with the hill welcoming people annually since 1965.

"We're in great shape and the forecast has really been on our side," Bishop told *The Highlander* during a Dec. 8 interview. "Last year we opened on the same weekend, but we've been very fortunate this year. Mother Nature has been very generous – the cold temperatures we've been getting mean the hill is in great shape."

Bishop said crews have been working around the clock for weeks getting things ready. After a strong early snowfall in November, staff groomed whatever naturally fell and started adding to it with manufactured snow. Bishop said there's eight-to-ten inches of real snow, with the rest topped up by machines that have been running 24/7 so far this month.

It will likely be a quiet opening weekend, Bishop said, with things really getting into full swing for Boxing Day.

"We will be opening at least two lifts and two runs, potentially three runs, depending on how things go this week. Everything is on target for a great season," Bishop said.

"Last year, we opened on the same weekend. In 2024, we had a good early snowfall and then started getting into warmer temperatures. This year, it's been a little bit different. Kind of the opposite of that, where we had a bit of snow but the colder temperatures have really enabled us to build a good base [with the machines]," Bishop added.

While they won't be in operation this weekend, Bishop said upgrades to the upper tunnel and pony lifts have been completed. The structures will re-debut Dec. 26.

Saying there's nothing especially new people need to know this year, Bishop said he expects the ski hill to be open every day between now and spring 2026, other than Christmas Day. To ski, people can purchase day passes, booklets that grant up to eight visits, or season passes.

Sir Sam's boasts 12 runs and five ski lifts, a heated chalet, and on-site ski shop operated by Delancey Sports.

There will be themed festivities through the ski hill's opening two weekends – Dec. 13 there's a 'Jingle Mingle' holiday party beginning at 6 p.m., tickets required, while Dec. 20 is Sir Sam's annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony, starting at 4 p.m.

Asked what people should know, or consider, before their first run of the season, Bishop recommended everybody take things slow to start.

"Don't come in thinking you're going to be 100 per cent ready to go. Start off slow and steady, build up to that perfect run," Bishop said. "It's important to build the stamina back up, for people to get their body familiar with the slopes again – then everyone should be just fine."

Larry Hewitt is celebrating 50 years of Hawk River Construction in 2025. *Submitted.*

Hawk River turns 50

By Mike Baker

Larry Hewitt has seen and done it all in his 50 years at the helm of Hawk River Construction in Haliburton County.

The firm is celebrating its golden jubilee this year – a testament to Hewitt's drive, commitment and standards since starting out as a one-man operation, working out of his home on Hawk Lake beginning in 1975. Just 21 then, Hewitt bought a truck and started touting his services around the community.

"After that, we got a loader, then swapped it for a backhoe and started doing septic beds, lot clearing and that type of thing. I was completely on my own at the time, so whether the company succeeded or not was all on me," Hewitt said.

He'd had about a decade's worth of experience by then fixing and building things. Hewitt's father passed away when he was 12. The eldest boy in the family, that meant most of the technical and labour-intensive jobs landed at his feet.

As a teen, he earned extra money doing odd jobs around the lake – hooking up the water for seasonal cottages, draining ahead of winter, and more.

"Whatever needed doing, I did. I got a lot of practical experience in my early years. I was largely self-taught, but picked up lots of helpful information from different people. I was always paying attention and learning," Hewitt noted.

He took any job he could during Hawk River's early years. By the late 1970s, he'd added a second truck and about four employees, expanding into the logging business. For years, he had workers in the bush in Huntsville, stripping and transporting trees to wherever they needed to go.

Around that time, Hewitt also secured a contract with one of the local townships to assist with a development on Haliburton Lake. That opened the door to even more business, Hewitt said, and the development of his shop, built on Mallard Road in 1984.

Hawk River is responsible for building Ross Lake Road and most of the sideroads around Percy Lake, completing that work in the early 80s. In the early 2000s, be built the 18-kilometre West Shore Road in Dysart et al.

In 2009, Hewitt spent an entire summer rebuilding a Ministry of Natural Resources dam in Opeongo River Provincial Park and, a couple of years ago, wrapped a three-year, 100-unit housing development in Dwight.

"That was our biggest project to date, a $20 million job. We had to increase our labour force," Hewitt said. "We had about 18 people working up there around the clock."

As he reflects on the thousands of projects completed within Haliburton County, and beyond, Hewitt said he's most proud of the relationships he's cultivated with customers over the years.

"We made our business on doing a lot of private work for cottages and homes in the area – the biggest thing for me is making sure we have a strong rapport with our community," Hewitt said. "I'm also proud of the labour force we'd had. I've had a lot of people work for me over the years – many of them have gone on to key roles with townships in the area, or gone into business [for themselves]."

Hewitt acknowledges retirement is on the horizon – he scaled back over the summer, but has been getting out to job sites regularly through fall and early winter.

"I'm not an office person at all – I like to get my boots on the ground, that's where I get my satisfaction," Hewitt said, priding himself on visiting every project his company takes to ensure work is completed to Hawk River's usual standards.

Hewitt is also passionate about community building, contributing in-kind work to dozens of projects over the years. He donated the time and materials for the recent playground expansion at J.D. Hodgson Elementary School, built most of the walkway that connects Hal High to the industrial park, and gave money for the construction of the Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association fish hatchery on Gelert Road.

"I am a big believer that the stronger the fabric of the community, the stronger and more diverse the community will be," Hewitt said.

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Highlander events

Standing in solidarity

There was a solemn atmosphere inside the Haliburton Sculpture Forest early Dec. 6, as about 30 people paid their respects to the 14 women who lost their lives in the 'Montreal Massacre' shooting at Ecole Polytechnique de Montreal on Dec. 6, 1989. The 36th anniversary event was hosted by the YWCA Peterborough Haliburton and Canadian Federation of University Women Haliburton Highlands. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: About 30 people came together for the second-annual offering in Haliburton. Bottom left: Nycole Duncan, who runs the Haliburton Emergency Rural SafeSpace on behalf of the Peterborough Haliburton YWCA, addresses the crowd. Bottom right: An attendee places a commemorative ribbon on a tree. *Photos by Steven Sherwood.*

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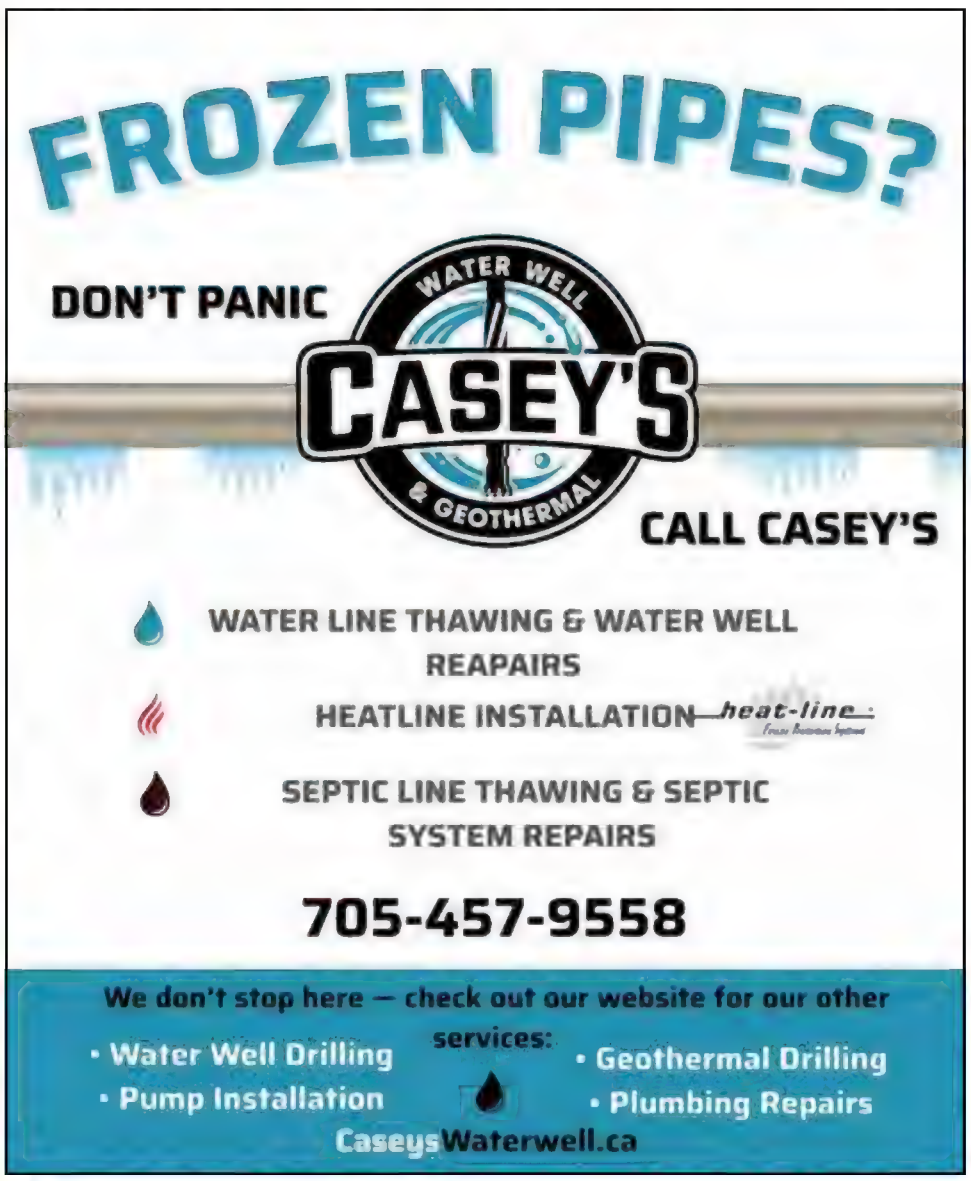
Highlander events

Breakfast with a ho, ho, ho

There were excited eyes and hungry mouths all around the room at YMCA Wanakita Dec. 6 as the Minden-based facility hosted its annual 'Breakfast with Santa' event. The free day featured face painting, carnival games, a live animal show, photos with Santa, and, of course, a free breakfast. Around 360 people attended the 13th annual event. *(Mike Baker).*

Left: Macy Mercer enjoys a moment with Santa. Right: Proud grandpa Tim Turcotte with little Henry Turcotte. *Photos by Steven Sherwood.*



Highlander events

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A holiday tradition

The spirit of Christmas was on-stage for all to see at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton this past weekend as Heritage Ballet and Skyline Dance Studio partnered for the 20th local production of *The Nutcracker.* Directed by Julie Barban, this year's festive-time spectacle was enjoyed by about 500 people across three shows Dec. 6 and 7. Barban said, "It was a great show. We've got some happy kids, parents and community members and I know that, to many of them, this is the start to the Christmas holidays." Barban said she made some changes this year, to mark the milestone anniversary, adding some new costumes and bringing unique elements to the traditional scenes. *(Mike Baker)*

Top: Chloe Morissette, Kendall Park, Alexis Dacey, Isabella Valentini, Keira Dacey and Gracie Pockett wow the crowd with their moves during *The Nutcracker.* Middle: Back row: Krisztina Biro, David Mills, Julie Barban, Lisa Irvine, and Gibson Pickett. Middle (boys jumping): Elliot Cybulski, Shawn Collins, Jackson Cybulski and Josh Collins. Front: Julia Bramham, Keira Dacey, Jessalyn Thompson, Avery Burk, Aubriana Davison, Sarah Gerrard, Reese Wood and Meghan Walker bust a move. Bottom: The Nutcracker, played by Tommy Griffith, and the Mouse King, played by Wilson Klodt Wong, take to the stage. *Photos by Steven Sherwood.*

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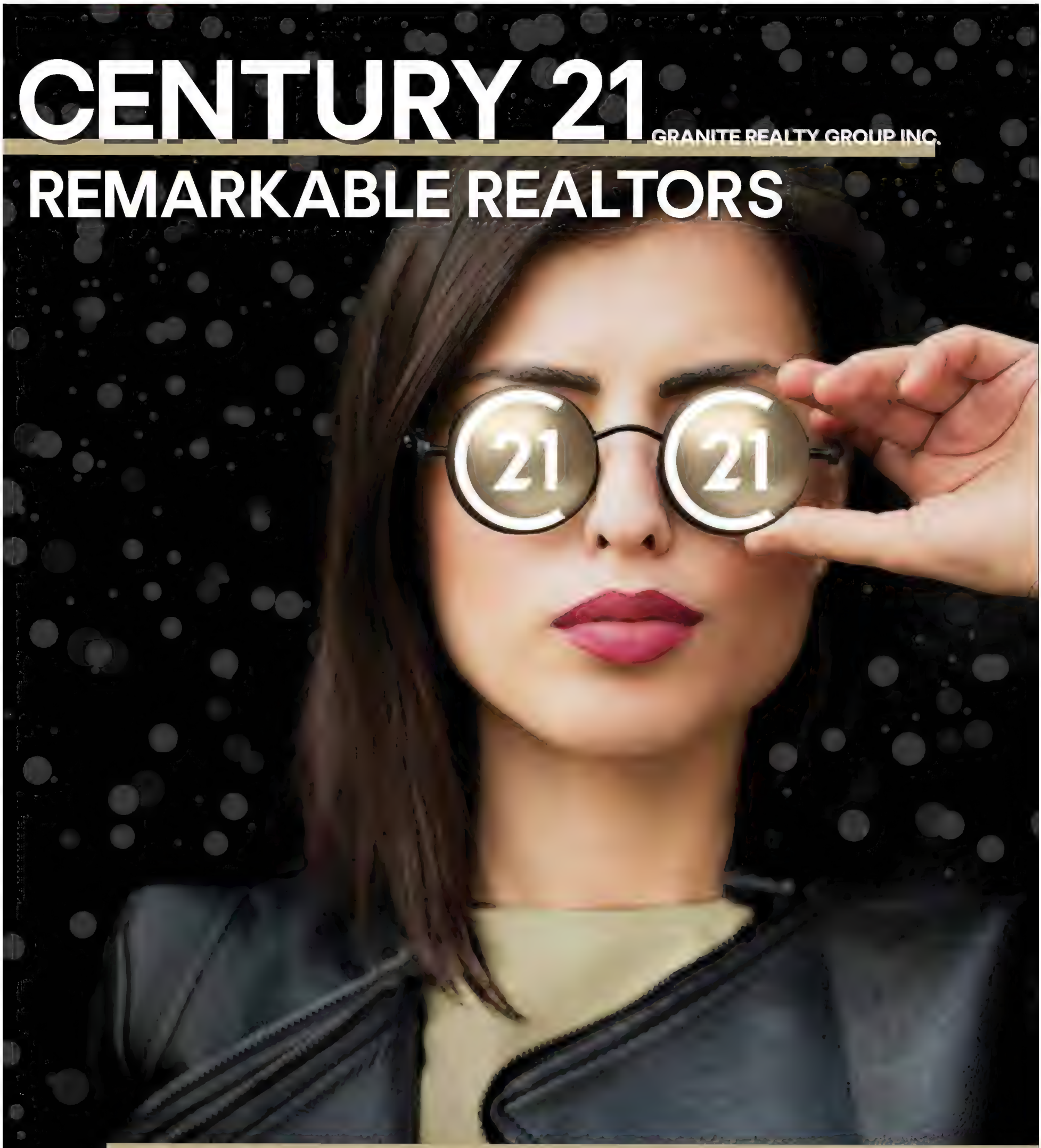

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Highlander events

Putting food on the table

Members of the Haliburton Highlands OPP Auxiliary were spread across the County this past weekend as the local police force held its annual Fill-A-Cruiser event at locations in Haliburton, Minden and Wilberforce. Members accepted non-perishable food donations at Easton's Valu-Mart, Dollo's Foodland, the Haliburton Foodland, Todd's Independent, and Wilberforce Foodland, gathering car-fulls of food, according to OPP Cst. Rob Adams. "The two stores in Haliburton had donations of 1,580 pounds of food, which worked out to a value of $2,970. It's amazing for the community to do that," Adams said, noting there were also 2,100 pound of food and $225 cash donated in Minden.*(Mike Baker)*

Left: A police cruiser at Dollo's Foodland. Right: Heather Clark made a cash donation to OPP Auxiliary member John Fountain. *Photos by Steven Sherwood.*

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UPCOMING HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Municipal Office (7 Milne St.), Fire Office and Public Works Office:

- December 24th 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
- CLOSED December 25th – January 1st

Minden Hills Cultural Centre / Agnes Jamieson Gallery (176 Bobcaygeon Rd.)

- CLOSED December 24th – January 1st

SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena (55 Parkside St.)

- December 24th 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
- December 31st 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
- CLOSED December 25th, December 26th, and January 1st.
- Regular operating hours December 27th - December 30th

Waste Disposal Sites

- Regular winter hours
- ALL SITES CLOSED December 25th and January 1st.

Regular operating hours resume on Friday, January 2, 2026. Visit our website for more information.

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

- December 11 – Regular Council Meeting
- December 15 – Special Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

The Township of Minden Hills is seeking interest from local service organizations who wish to enter into a Partnership Agreement with the Township for the collection of alcohol containers at a Waste Disposal Site, starting May 1, 2026.

The deadline to submit notice of interest is December 22, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. Follow our social media for more details or email waste@mindenhills.ca for more information and to submit your notice.

DROP-IN HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The drop-in holiday schedule for the SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena is available online and at the arena Front Desk. Check out the activities available from December 21 to January 4, 2026.

NOTICE OF 2026 BUDGET MEETINGS

Take Notice that there will be a Special meeting of Council and Public Meeting held on December 15, 2025 at 9:00 AM. The purpose of the meetings is to review and discuss the 2026 Mayoral Budget. **Members of the public may access the agenda and Budget materials on December 10, 2025.** Please visit our website for further details.

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

- A selection of artwork from the Agnes Jamieson Gallery's permanent collection, as well as new acquisitions, is now on display. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm. All are welcome. Admission is by donation.
- Join the UFO's (UnFinished Objects Craft Group) in the Welch Room on Friday, December 12 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. All are welcome!

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

SNOW REMOVAL

Section 181 of the Ontario Highway Traffic Act states: No person shall deposit snow or ice on a roadway without permission in writing so to do from the Ministry or the road authority responsible for the maintenance of the road. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8, s. 181.

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Festival goes with made in Canada theme

By Lisa Gervais

The theme of next summer's Highlands Summer Festival is 'made in Canada', artistic producer, Douglas Walker, announced Nov. 24.

"All of our shows next year are either Canadian plays or Canadian shows, bringing some of the best Canada has to offer," Walker said.

He said the first is the musical *Anne of Green Gables*. "What would be more Canadian than bringing you the amazing musical *Anne of Green Gables* – the story of plucky Anne, winning hearts and taking names? It's a classic Canadian story. I don't think there is a person in Canada who has not heard of *Anne of Green Gables* and it's going to be a fantastic show." Walker said it also offers a great opportunity for Haliburton youth to audition and contribute to the festival.

The second offering is Norm Foster's *Doris and Ivy in the Home*. Walker said it is Foster at his comedic best. "This is a hilarious story about Doris Mooney, a retired prison guard, and Ivy Hoffbauer, a former world champion skier, in Paradise

Highlands Summer Festival artistic producer, Douglas Walker, has announced the 2026 season lineup. *File.*

Village retirement home. Dapper Arthur Beech, who has designs on Ivy, completes the trio. Love, gossip, and sex behind the compost heap. It's going to be an absolutely heart-warming, hilarious play."

The third show features Fabian Arciniegas, whom Walker describes as an "amazing" Columbian-Canadian singer. The show is *Yo and My Shadow*. Walker said Arciniegas "takes you on a life-changing journey of words and song that will leave you with awe for the resilience of the human spirit. It's going to be beautiful, a celebration of music, movement, wit."

Fourth up is the "hilarious" *Too Many Cooks*, "an amazing farce" set during Prohibition with rum-running in full swing. Irving Bubbalowe and his daughter, Honey, have risked everything to open a gourmet restaurant in Niagara Falls. But their renowned singing chef fails to appear, and a Chicago gangster comes looking for illegal booze, trailed by a hot-blooded immigration officer and a suspicious teetotaling Mountie. Walker said it is going to be "absolutely crazy."

The season will end with the return of *Leisa Way and the Wayward Wind Band*, which Walker said are Summer Festival favourites. "Leisa tells fascinating stories with warmth and humour, while celebrating the music of legendary artists." He said crowds will be stamping their feet and singing along.

"We are super excited to bring (the lineup) to you; now we just have to get to work and bring it on its feet." Walker said they would be holding auditions in the new year. Season tickets and passes are at HighlandsSummerFestival.on.ca

Arts Council Haliburton Highlands fundraising for future over the holidays

The Arts Council Haliburton Highlands (ACHH) is hoping to catch people in a giving mood this holiday season, raising money to keep the arts alive and accessible to all in the County.

Board chair Chris Lynd said the Arts Council launched its Christmas-time giving campaign Nov. 1. She noted the funds will support local artists, public art projects and community programs.

"This community has helped us build a rich artistic and cultural identity," Lynd said. "We're asking everyone to help us continue that legacy – celebrating our artists, our history, and the creative spirit that defines Haliburton County."

Over the summer, the ACHH board developed a series of strategic priorities that Lynd said will guide the organization through the next decade. The initiatives focus on improving sustainability, collaboration and access to the arts.

"To sustain and grow, we need to continue to engage new volunteers and the local community while we build capacity to promote and support the arts in the Highlands," Lynd said.

The new priorities include: fostering an inclusive and sustainable environment for artists; focusing on fundraising and resource management to ensure the organization's history; establish ACHH as a widely-recognized and sought-after cultural sector partner; build collaborative and inclusive relationships with partners, arts organizations and artists; and improving accessibility to the community.

"Each of the council's strategic priorities is shaped with care and purpose, so that, together with community collaboration, meaningful, long-term benefits can be achieved for local arts in our community," the ACHH website reads.

Founded in 2006, the Arts Council is a volunteer-run non-profit that provides a voice for arts, heritage and culture across the Highlands.

Donations can be made online at haliburtonarts.on.ca/donate. Sponsorship and membership opportunities are also available by contacting Lynd at chrislynd51@gmail.com. *(Mike Baker)*

Haliburton County Council
is seeking members of the public for

Haliburton County Library Board

The County of Haliburton benefits from the involvement of local residents who help County Council make decisions about the Library programs and services provided to our citizens. Applicants for this position must be:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian Citizen
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As a Board Member you will be an advocate of the library's impact on the community and be prepared to take an active and responsible role in the governance and policymaking of the Board.

You can find the detailed posting along with application instructions on our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers

If you require assistance with the application process please contact Andrea Brown, Library CEO/Chief Librarian at info@haliburtonlibrary.ca.

The application process will close on December 19, 2025, at noon.

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Junior highlanders

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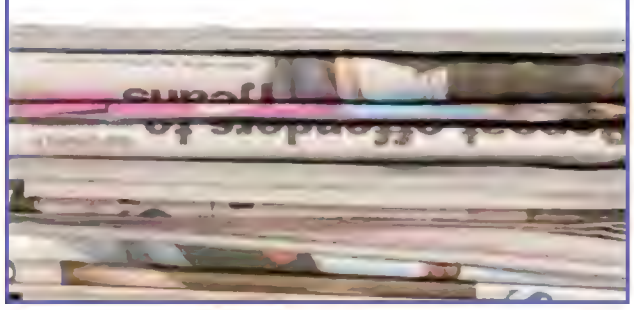

Students have been in rehearsals for *Puffs: Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* since late September. *Submitted.*

Making magic at Hal High

By Mike Baker

Ever wondered what all the other students at a certain school of Witchcraft and Wizardry were up to while the eponymous 'Boy Who Lived' spent years getting into trouble at the fictional Hogwarts Castle?

The Hal High drama club, in partnership with local theatre company Ctrl-ART-Del, is preparing to take the public on a behind-the-scenes tell-all, revealing what life was like for those who lived in the shadow of one Harry Potter.

The local production of *Puffs: Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* lands at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion in Haliburton for three shows Dec. 12-14. Director, Christine Carr, said it's a funny show with a story fit for the whole family.

"There will be some familiar names throughout the play that audiences may recognize. The play is not affiliated with that story, but has some similar ideas," Carr said.

The students at the unnamed school are sorted into four houses – like the mainstream version, only with different names: the Braves, the Snakes, the Smarts and the Puffs.

"The Puffs are a house that is always ignored and forgotten," Carr said. "The story focuses on the students who are particularly forgotten or ignored. It really gets into the importance of learning about being okay to be yourself."

The production features a cast of 13 students from Grades 9 to 12, with Carr saying there's a nice mix of experienced performers and first-timers. Rehearsals began in late September.

There have also been contributions from others within the school community, with the production involving more props and a larger set than any other Hal High play. Carr said tech students have constructed a full-sized bathtub for one scene, art students have assisted with numerous set and design elements, while leadership students have helped promote the show.

Carr said some students have stepped up to organize a magic-themed spirit day ahead of the play, while others have created a wizarding world themed menu of snacks and refreshments, which will be available during intermission.

The story is based on the one written by Matt Cox that premiered in New York City in 2015, Carr said, but has been locally adapted. Fellow teachers and HHSS drama club leaders Rebekah Borgdorff and Meghan Mardus have also taken on key roles.

"This story was created independently… which allowed us to play with the ideas and characters to create a really inclusive and positive play," Carr said.

Show times are Dec. 12 and 13 at 7 p.m. and Dec. 14 at 2 p.m. Tickets are by donation – a deliberate move, Carr said, to allow anyone to attend. "We don't want there to be any barriers to people seeing the show," Carr said, with the proceeds supporting the drama club's next production. She said the club does not receive any funding for its productions, with things like show rights, scripts, set and costumes all needing to be paid for.

Anyone wanting to reserve a seat can contact Carr directly at christine.carr@tldsb.on.ca. She promised it will be an entertaining couple of hours.

"This play truly has something for any age. Anyone watching will see themselves reflected in the characters, will see their own struggle in self-discovery and acceptance," Carr said. "For those who enjoy reading or watching that famous magic school, it will bring back a nostalgia of when the world felt real and full of possibilities. When they hoped for their own owl to arrive, because the play is about bringing that magic to life."

Junior highlanders

Red Hawks on the board

The Red Hawks boys' varsity hockey team got their first point of the season Dec. 4 with a hard-fought 5-5 draw against Adam Scott Secondary School on home ice. The tie followed a 9-3 defeat at the hands of LCVI Lindsay on the road Dec. 3. The squad plays Campbellford Secondary School at home Dec. 11. Puck drop is slated for 2 p.m. at A.J. LaRue Arena. (*Lisa Gervais).*

Above: Brody Hartwig flies down the ice in the HHSS Red Hawks home game versus Adam Scott Secondary School Dec. 4. *Photo by Lisa Gervais.*

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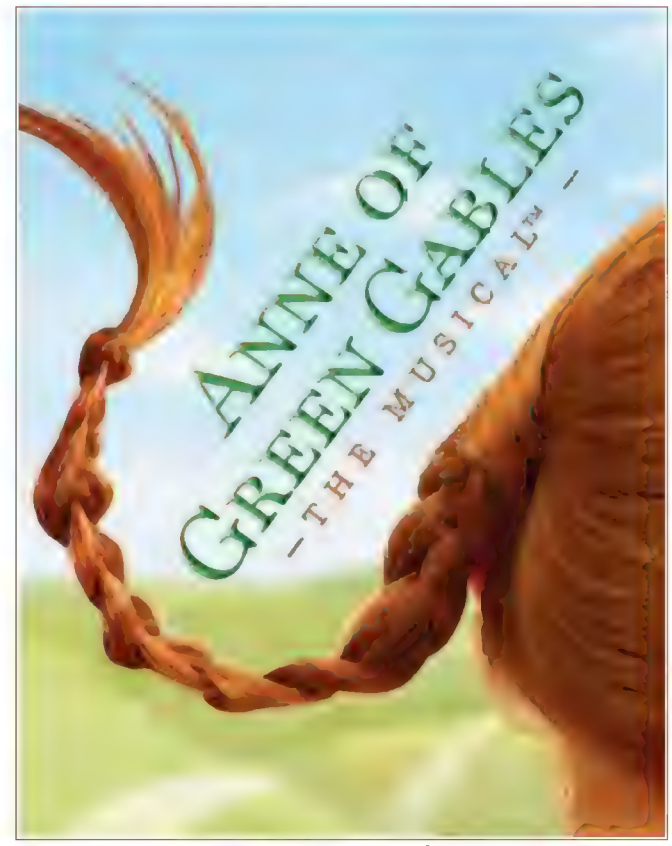

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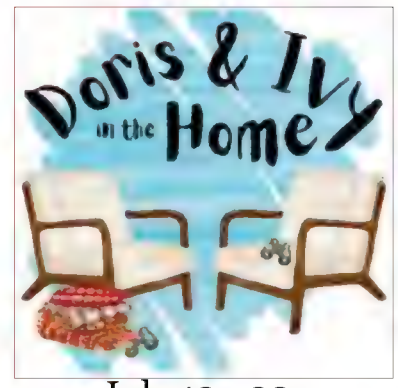

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Haliburton County Huskies alternate captain Isaac Larmand makes a play at centre ice during the team's 4-1 win over the North York Rangers Dec. 6. *Photo by Michah Wilson.*

In-form Huskies win again

By Mike Baker

Haliburton County Huskies forward Isaac Larmand believes the local team is one of the most in-form squads in the Ontario Junior Hockey League right now, winning back-to-back games last weekend to strengthen their claim on a playoff position.

The 19-year-old alternate captain, in his third season with the Huskies, has been a key contributor in recent weeks as the blue and white have surged up the East Conference standings. He was on the scoresheet again Dec. 5, registering a goal and assist in a 5-1 road win over the Wellington Dukes, before a 4-1 victory over the North York Rangers on home ice Dec. 6.

"Getting two wins to start the month is a bit of a confidence-booster – I like the way we're competing and fighting right now," Larmand said. "There's lots of games in December. I think this can be a month where we push ourselves and move up the standings and try to get into the best position possible for playoffs. We're all on the same page with our goals."

The Huskies are still in fifth position in the standings, with 15 wins, 10 losses, one tie and four overtime losses in 30 games. They're five points back of the Pickering Panthers and Newmarket Hurricanes in third and fourth, and seven back of the Trenton Golden Hawks in second.

There are six games remaining on the Huskies schedule in 2025 – they're on the road Dec. 12 against the Aurora Tigers, travel to Cobourg Dec. 15, welcome the Oakville Blades to Minden Dec. 18, and head south down Hwy. 35 for a match-up with the Lindsay Muskies Dec. 19. After the Christmas break, they have a home double-header Dec. 29 and 31 against the Mississauga Steelheads and Muskies.

Building momentum

Travelling to Wellington last Friday, the Huskies knew they had a mountain to climb. The hometown club had won just two of 12 match ups away to the Dukes since 2021, but Larmand said, given recent results, confidence was high.

An even opening period ended with no score, but the Huskies flew out the gates in the second, taking control early. Ryan Gosse broke the deadlock 6:45 in, notching his 10th goal of the season unassisted to give the blue and white something to hold onto. Larmand doubled the advantage at 12:11, his 12th of the year coming on the powerplay from Carson Durnin and Josh Denes. Brody Coe added a late third at 19:40, from Jack Cook and Chase Del Colombo.

The Dukes threatened to respond in the third, hitting back at 8:07 to break Owen Edwards' shutout, but Christopher Brydges and Cook responded with two more powerplay markers late in the period to make sure of the result.

"That's always a tough barn to go into, they've got pretty good fans who create a good atmosphere. We've had some difficult times playing there in the past, but we knew exactly what we had to do this time and came away with a huge win," Larmand said.

The scoreline in Saturday's home tilt against North York could have been double what it was, such was the Huskies dominance. The blue and white outshot the Rangers 52-19.

Durnin and fourth-liner Mike Mardula were standouts, each helping themselves to two goals and an assist in the win. Lewis Hergaarden, Carter Petrie, Denes and Gosse also had assists.

After taking points in 10 of their last 12 games, Larmand said this Huskies team has turned a corner.

"Early on, we had a very young team where everyone was learning new systems and how to play in this league. We've made some changes, but now a couple months in I think all the guys are buying in and pulling in the same direction," Larmand said. "Our special teams have been really good recently, so we're performing in all situations."

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Home of the Highland Storm

Storm edges barnburner

The U18 Rep Highland Storm put on an explosive offensive performance Dec. 5, earning a well-deserved 6–3 victory over the visiting Upper York squad. With a packed crowd in the stands at S.G. Nesbitt Memorial Arena and plenty of energy in the building, the Storm came out flying from the opening puck drop.

The Storm wasted no time establishing momentum, striking three times in the first period. Brody Hartwig opened the scoring less than six minutes into the game, finishing off a tight passing play for the early lead. Just seconds later, Hartwig buried his second of the night on another strong drive to the net. He completed the natural hat trick at 8:24 of the first, giving the Storm full control of the pace while the home crowd erupted.

The second period saw Upper York push back with a hard surge, scoring three unanswered goals to tie the game 3–3 midway through the frame. Despite the momentum swing, the Storm bench remained calm and composed. Strong defensive shifts from Evan Jones, Parker Simms, Mason Gibson, Evan Shee and Matthew Scheffee helped settle the play, while goaltender Nolan Taylor made several important stops to keep the game from tipping further.

The Storm's response came quickly. At 7:32 of the second, Jack Tomlinson tipped in a shot from Caleb Manning to restore the Storm's lead, shifting momentum firmly back in their favour. From there, the home team tightened up defensively and began controlling zone time once again.

In the third period, the Storm pulled away for good. Jace Mills extended the lead at 6:21, ripping a shot past the Upper York goaltender. Minutes later, Chace Comer sealed the game with a beautifully placed finish at 8:35, capping off an excellent forechecking shift.

It was a complete team effort—physical, fast, and disciplined when it mattered. With this 6–3 win, the U18 Rep Highland Storm continue to build confidence and momentum as their season progresses. *Submitted.*

Brody Hartwig scored a natural hat-trick in the U18 Storm's 6-3 win. *Photo by Steven Sherwood.*

STARS of the WEEK

BRODY HARTWIG

Recorded a natural first-period hat-trick and added an assist, leading the Storm's offensive surge

EVAN SHEE

Delivered a steady defensive performance, breaking up rushes and making smart plays under pressure to help stabilize the game.

CHACE COMER

Added a key third-period goal, consistently generating offensive chances while supporting defensively.

Photos by Tim Tofflemire

SCORE BOARD

Dec. 1 U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs Manvers 6-1 W
U13 Rep Curry Chevrolet vs Lindsay 4-4 T
Dec. 2 U9 MD Haliburton Hockey Haven vs Brock 10-2 L
U15 Rep Cheryl Smith REMAX vs Newcastle 5-2 W
Dec. 4U13 Rep Curry Chevrolet vs Brock 2-2 T
U15 Minden Pharmasave vs Kawartha 4-2 L
Dec. 5 U18 Rep Haliburton Timber Mart vs Upper York 6-3 W
Dec. 6 U15 The Pepper Mill Steak & Pasta House vs Millbrook 6-1 W
Dec. 7 U9 MD Haliburton Hockey Haven vs Millbrook 5-2 L
U11 Rep Tom Prentice & Sons vs Ennismore 3-3 T
U15 Minden Pharmasave vs Millbrook 7-2 W
U13 Rep Curry Chevrolet vs Sturgeon 2-2 T
U18 A&W Haliburton vs Durham 7-1 L
U15 Rep Cheryl Smith REMAX vs Durham 5-1 W
U18 Rep Haliburton Timber Mart vs Brock 6-5 L

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What's on

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 129 Haliburton

Mondays: Office open 9 a.m. to noon, clubroom closed. Bridge at 1 p.m.
Tuesdays: Games and cards night starting at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome. Fun darts at 7 p.m.
Wednesdays: Bid euchre 1 p.m. start, Remembrance Hall. Bingo, doors open at 5 p.m. with a 7 p.m. start time, Remembrance Hall. Snack bar available from 5:30 p.m. – French fries and hot dogs available while supplies last.
Thursdays: General meeting third Thursday of the month, ladies auxiliary meeting last Thursday of the month.
Fridays: meat draw, five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m., tickets $2 per draw. Paul Sisson, MC. Friday fun darts 4:30 p.m. onwards. 50/50 draw at 5 p.m., tickets are $1 and available in the clubroom. Beginning July 4, board games for seniors from 10 a.m. to noon.
Saturdays: Open only for special events Clubroom hours: Monday 3-9 p.m., Tues 5-9 p.m., Wed/Thurs 3-6 p.m., Fri 3-7 p.m., Saturday and Sunday closed.
Upcoming events: Drum circle Jan. 4, with a 1 p.m. start time.

Royal Canadian Legion - Mabel D. Brannigan Branch 636 Minden

Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Monday to Thursday** with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and dinner 4-7 p.m.
Saturday all day breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with meat draws at 11 a.m.
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Monday: Euchre 1-3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1-3 p.m., Darts 7-9 p.m. and euchre 7-9 p.m.

Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 624 Wilberforce

Monday: open 7 to 10 p.m. There's darts Dec. 15, 22 and 29 at 7 p.m. Cost is $5 per player.
Tuesday: closed, special events only
Wednesday: open 2 to 10 p.m. Dec. 17 is darts at 2 p.m. $5/player. There's also quick supper from 5 to 6:30 p.m., with the menu changing weekly. Cost is $10 per person. And Cribbage League starts at 6:30 p.m., no need to pre-register.
Thursday: open 2 to 10 p.m. HHHS social rec Dec. 11 at 10 a.m.
Friday: open 2 to 11 p.m.
Dec. 19 is wings and jam session from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is $15 per pound. Dec. 12 is Community Care 55+ Lunch $17, at noon, featuring Fish and chips, one piece $15, two piece $20 .
Saturday: open 2 to 9 p.m. Meat draw Dec. 13 and 20 at 3 p.m. Dec. 20 is trivia night at 7 p.m. $5/player.
Sunday: closed, special events only. Dec. 14, LA Breakfast from 9-11 a.m. Cost is $10 per person.

EVENTS

Dec. 11, noon to 5 p.m. The Post House Christmas Market at 1297 Kashagawigamog Lake Rd. in Minden. There will be freshly-baked goods including sourdough, gingerbread, cookie dough logs, sticky toffee puddings, brittle; goods from local makers and more.

Dec. 11, 4:15 p.m. Those Other Movies returns with a screening of the comedy *The Baltimorons* at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion. The flick stars Michael Strassner and Liz Larsen as they deal with mental health issues starting on Christmas Eve and going into Christmas Day. Tickets are $10 at the door. There will be a second screening at 7:15 p.m.

Dec. 12, 6 p.m. The public is invited to attend the rescheduled Dorset tree lighting at Dorset Centennial Lions Park. Bring a travel mug to enjoy some complimentary hot chocolate. The Dorset Lions will be serving hot dogs.

Dec. 13, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Haliburton School of Art + Design is hosting its 'wrap it up' student exhibition in the great hall. Showcasing works from the ceramics, fibre arts, visual and creative arts programs.

Dec. 13, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Stop by the Dysart et al library for a joyful Hanukkah Storytime Party. Celebrate the Festival of Lights with stories, songs and crafts that share the warmth and wonder of this special holiday. No registration required.

Dec. 13, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Winter Yule Market at the Minden's Lion Hall at 166 Bobcaygeon Rd. Browse unique handmade gifts such as candles, gems, teas, body products, jewellery, art, baking, crochet and much more.

Dec. 13, 2 to 4 p.m. Amanda Lytle, a certified death doula, will be at the Dysart et al library for conversations about grief, loss and reflection. This is not a grief support group or counselling session, but a safe, welcoming space to talk openly. Register by calling 705-457-2241 or emailing programs@haliburtonlibrary.ca.

Dec. 14, 12:30 p.m. Come out to Wilberforce as Santa Claus makes his annual pitstop in the community. Following the parade, all children 10 and under can stop by the Lloyd Watson Community Centre to receive a free picture with Santa and a present, courtesy of Highlands East township and the Ward 3 Volunteer Fire Department.

Dec. 18, 1 to 3 p.m. Haliburton Highlands Writers and Editors Network meeting at the Minden branch of the Haliburton County Public Library. Gather and meet members, read stories, general news. For more information contact Kay Millard at 705-286-6635. Meetings run the third Thursday of each month.

Dec. 19, 10:30 a.m. Celebrate the magic of the season with a special Holiday Storytime at the Minden Hills and Dysart et al libraries. Enjoy festive stories, cheerful songs and plenty of winter wonder. After storytime, children can stay to create a simple seasonal craft to take home. Perfect for young children.

Dec. 20, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The Haliburton County Public Library is running winter solstice drop-in crafts activities at branches in Wilberforce, Stanhope, Dysart et al and Minden Hills. Make your own tealight luminary to brighten wintery nights, while supplies last. No registration required.

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What's on

Party time in Haliburton

Christmas is always a special time of the year for Haliburton Rotarian Richard van Nood, who is looking forward to the service club's 12th annual community Christmas party in Haliburton village Dec. 12. There will be free fun for the whole family at A.J. LaRue Arena and the Haliburton Legion, said Van Nood, who coordinated this year's event. There will be free skating from 5 to 7 p.m. at the arena, with live music, food and other offerings at the legion. "There will be a live band, pizza, loot bags for every kid that attends," Van Nood said. "Everything is free of charge. This is just one of our ways of giving back to Haliburton. Things are expensive enough for parents out there, so putting on a free event like this gives everyone something to look forward to over the holidays." *(Mike Baker)*

Above: Bristol Wattling, Teaha Wattling, Harper Kadlovski and Carter Kadlovski enjoyed meeting Santa at last year's party. *File.*

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FOR SALE – THE WAIT IS OVER … Our award-winning Honey Butter is back! (Clove, Golden Honey, Creamed & Wax also available) Call Tom at 705-286-3628 or stop by at 2801 Blairhampton Road, Minden

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FOR SALE – GUILFORD FIREWOOD – Nicely cut and split, ready to burn. $130. per face cord – pick up. Delivery available, call 705-754-3034

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FOR RENT – Large 1 Bdrm Apt for rent, on water, 10 minutes from Haliburton. Available January 1st.. Fully furnished, private entrance, 400 sq ft screened porch. Single mature nonsmoking tenant preferred. $1,700. Per month including heat, hydro, WiFi and parking. Pictures available upon request. Please call 705-457-0861

WANTED

J & D TOWING & SERVICE STATION - will pay top dollar for scrap cars. We also provide towing services as well as flat bed. Call Jim 705-447-2113

HELP WANTED

STEDMAN'S MALL – looking for a cleaner, part time, 3 to 5 hours per week, flexible hours. $75 to $100 per week. Please contact Sam 416-294-9260

WORK WANTED

CONSTRUCTION WORKER looking for work. Familiar with all aspects of construction. Mason by trade. Available for weekends or rainy days or full time, Call Shannon 306-317-7073

EVENT

EVENT - STAINED GLASS WORKSHOPS from beginner up. Learn the art of Stained Glass in one or two day classes. Call Tom at 705-286-3628

NOTICE

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS MEETINGS - Sundays - 10:30 am at St. Anthony's, 27 Victoria Street Haliburton. Wednesdays - 7:00 PM at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle St. in Minden - rear door. Thinking about alcohol. Thinking about stopping. We've been there. We can help!

AL ANON- WE CARE, are you troubled by someone's drinking? Meetings: Thursdays 7 p.m., St. Anthony's 27 Victoria Street, Haliburton, and Mondays 7 p.m. at Highland Hills United Church, 21 Newcastle, Rear Entrance, Minden. 1-888-4AL-ANON (1-888-425-2666) al-anon.org All are welcome.

NOTICE

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS Admission is free and the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. This meeting is for addicts only. New meeting in Haliburton that meets every Thursday from 7:30-8:30 p.m. at 83 Maple Ave. Unit 7A in Haliburton Halco Plaza, behind Castle Antiques. For more information and an online version visit www.cloana.org or call 1-888-811-3887

HELP WANTED

The Corporation of the County of Haliburton Requires a Community Safety and Well-Being Coordinator

Under the oversight of the Director, this vacant full-time position conducts research and supports program outcomes through the application of cross-sector partnerships, collective impact planning and principles, and community engagement and training. Further, this position supports the communication efforts of community service providers to raise awareness among residents of available support programs.

The successful applicant will have completed post-secondary education in a related discipline and possess a minimum four years of progressive experience. Applicants with a comparable combination of education and experience will also be considered.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a more detailed posting and job description.

Please forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than January 2, 2026, at 4:30pm.

We thank all who apply for this position; however, only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is an equal opportunity employer. Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act,* the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

Employment Opportunity
Municipality of Dysart et al

Public Works Equipment Operator
(permanent, full-time)

Reporting to the Operation Manager the successful applicant will have sound knowledge and methods, tools, and equipment required for the general maintenance of the municipal road system including bridges, culverts, drainage, and other roads / property.

A valid Ontario 'A' or 'D' licence (manual) with 'Z' endorsement is required along with an acceptable abstract. Pursuant to CUPE Local #2142 the rate of pay is $28.88 per hour based on a 40-hour work week. Pension and Benefits after a 6-month probationary period.

Upon final selection, the applicant will be required to provide, at their own expense, a Criminal Record and Judicial Matters check from the Ontario Provincial Police or appropriate police force. The detailed job description is available on our website www.dysartetal.ca/careers

Interested individuals are invited to email a detailed resume and cover letter to: Sonja Marx, HR Manager - hr@dysartetal.ca

No Later Than 4:00 pm Friday December 12th, 2025.

*** We thank all who apply; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Accommodations for applicants with disabilities will be provided upon request. The Municipality of Dysart et al is an equal opportunity employer. Personal information is collected in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and will be used only for employment purposes. ***

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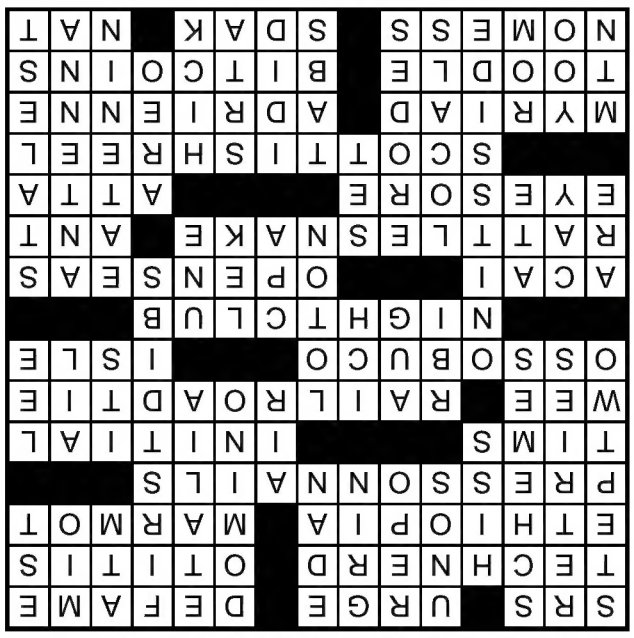
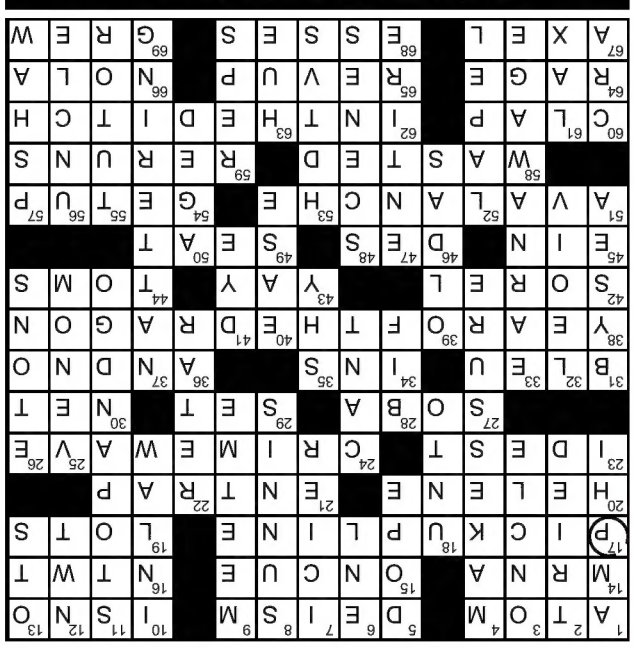
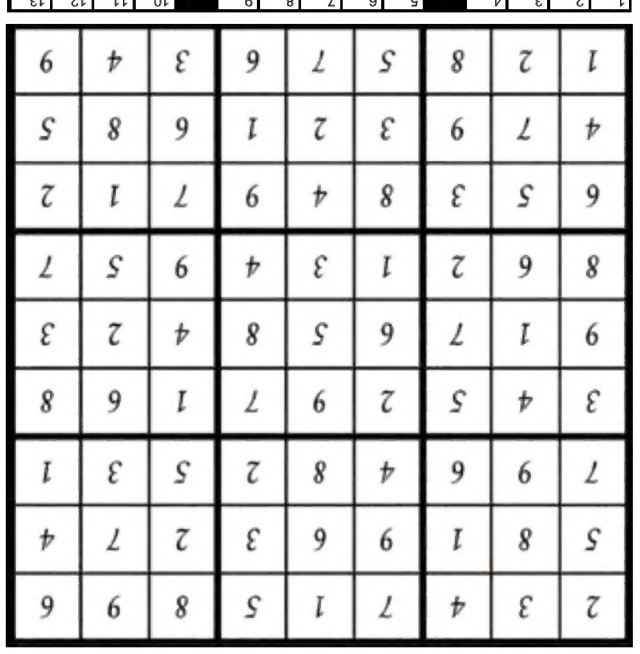


THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

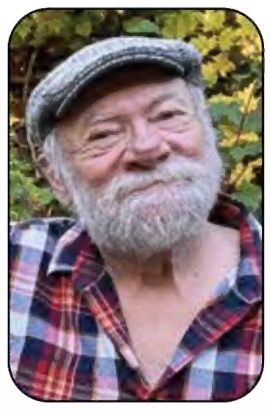




OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Grahame Wales



With profound sadness and gratitude for a life well lived, the family of Grahame Wales announces his peaceful death on December 4, 2025 at the age of 78.

Grahame was born on May 4, 1947 in Dorking, England and immigrated to Toronto at 6 months of age with his parents Esme Wales and Ian Neilson and sister, Margaret.

Grahame grew up in Toronto, and studied Fish and Wildlife at Sir Sandford Fleming College. In 1976, he and Debbie married and moved to Minden where he worked for several years with the Ministry of Natural Resources and The Leslie Frost Centre. In 1992 he decided to work full time in their pottery studio, Earth and Fire Pottery. He soon became known as The Hairy Potter, and loved to sit at the wheel, regaling visitors with funny stories and bad jokes. He was able to work in the studio until shortly before his death.

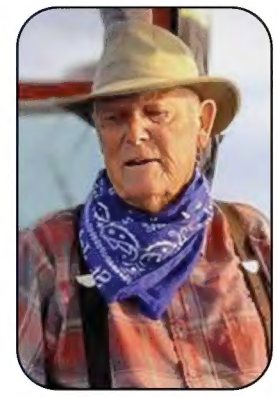
To know Grahame was to love him. He was kind, generous, smart, creative, and hilarious - he made everyone feel special. He was well-travelled and loved an adventure, but most of all he loved being home–in the house he and Debbie built from logs milled from their own property–where he could cook elaborate meals and watch the birds from his favourite easy chair.

He will be greatly missed by Debbie (nee Tisdall), his wife of 49 years; his children Jenn (Darren) and Josh (Walter); his beloved grandchildren Adiya, Keetyn, Luca, and Leo; his special sister Margaret (Ron) Story and brother-in-law to Cathy (Don) Tisdall, Liz (Art) Bloomfield, Michael (Jan) Tisdall and Anne (John) Nagel, as well as many close relatives; and his wonderful friends, who were, to him, like family. Nothing made him happier than being surrounded by loved ones – at home, in his studio, or at his favourite place in the world, the family cottage on Red Pine Lake.

In lieu of flowers, if you so choose, donations can be made to H.A.V.E.: Help a Village Effort (helpavillageeffort.org/donate), Food for Kids Haliburton (foodforkids.ca/support-us), Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (hhhs.ca/foundation) or a charity close to your heart. A celebration of life will be held on January 10th, 2026 at Bonnie View Inn.

In Loving Memory of

Donald "Don" Curry



CURRY, Donald "Don" - It is with love and sadness that we share the news of the passing of Don on Monday, December 1, 2025 at the age of 96 1/2.

Beloved husband and best friend of the late Elizabeth "Betty" (2006) for over 57 years. They built a family grounded in love. Cherished and adored by his son Clifford (Martine) and daughter Cathy Osgood (Peter). Devoted grandpa of Matthew (Colleen), Jennifer (Shawn Jefferson) and Jessica (Zac Wrobel). Great Grandfather of Quinn and Claire Jefferson, Ava and Brynn Curry and Rylie Wrobel.

Dad came from a large and loving family consisting of eight siblings in the beautiful village of Haliburton. Brother of the late George (2005) and Terry, late Gwen (2018) and Joe, late Millie (2023) and Ernie, late Russell (2002) and Faye, late Lloyd (2025) and Louise, late Ruth (2021) and Les, and Jack (2025). He will be fondly remembered by his many nieces and nephews.

Dad and mom spent most of their years together in Sudbury (Gatchell). Where dad was a long-time employee of Inco, and a proud volunteer firefighter. They spent many summers at the camp at Ratter Lake and those classic Labour Day get togethers. They later spent their retirement divided between Haliburton, Manitoulin Island and Arizona.

Dad was very proud to tell you that he was retired longer than he worked.

Dad made friends everywhere he went with his smile and quick wit and the best hugs. He always said he would live to be 102 then get shot by a jealous husband...thank goodness that did not happen.

Dad and mom spent their summers on Manitoulin Island sharing adventures and stories and countless times seeing beloved deer with their grandkids whom they adored.

Dad's legacy will live on in the countless lives he touched.

He will be missed by his cherished friends Roy and Maureen Hannah, Tracey, Brent, and Jennifer. The Hannah's were like family. Deanna Rosenberg who kept dad in line and on standby to book his appointment and any other task of which he could think.

The staff of F.J. Davey Home in Sault Ste. Marie, where do we begin to thank each of you for the unconditional love that you gave to our dad. You are all truly angels in disguise.

Don will have a celebration of life in the spring 2026 in Haliburton where he will be laid to rest with wife, mother and his siblings. Memorial donations to the FJ Davey Home or the charity of your choice is greatly appreciated.

Arrangements entrusted to Northwood Funeral Home Cremation and Reception Centre (942 Great Northern Rd, Sault Ste. Marie, ON P6B 0B6, 705-945-7758). Fond memories and expressions of sympathy may be offered at www.northwoodfuneral.com

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In Loving Memory of

Gary White

Resident of Highland Grove

At his residence on Tuesday morning, November 25, 2025 in his 82nd year. Beloved husband of Linda White (nee Knight). Dear brother of Joan Pocklington (Terry - predeceased), Ron (Carol). Predeceased by his parents Charles and Ethel White and his brother Charlie. Also lovingly remembered by his many nieces and nephews. Gary enjoyed old cars and his yearly fishing trip.

Private Celebration Of Life

A Private Celebration of Gary's life may take place at a later date. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation or Diabetes Canada would be appreciated by the family. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the **HALIBURTON COMMUNITY FUNERAL HOME** 13523 Hwy. #118, Haliburton, Ontario (705) 457-9209.

Community Funeral Home

Highlander puzzles

Long Division

by Barbara Olson
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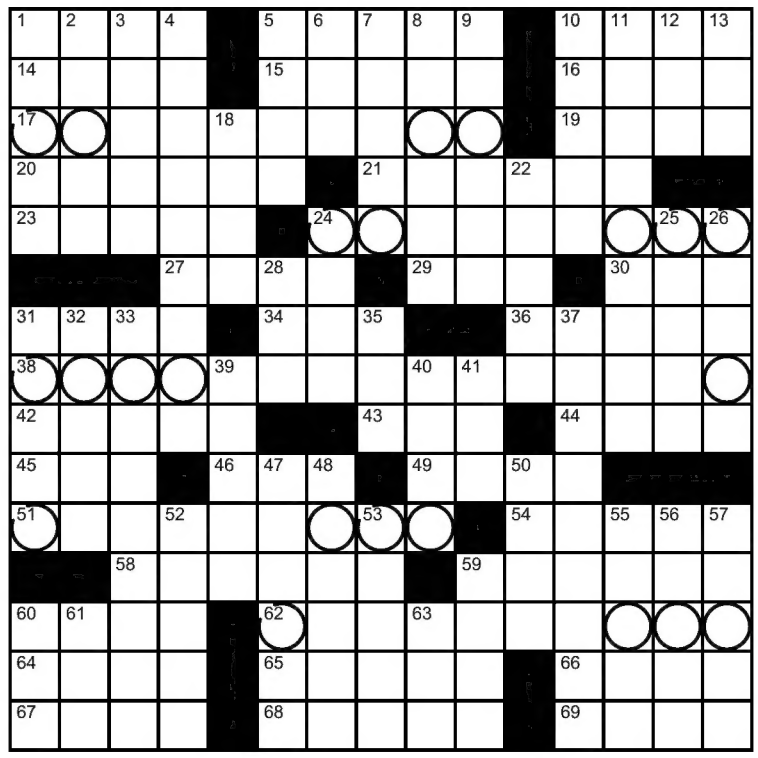

Across

1 Bit of chemistry
5 Belief in a god
10 "Money ___ object"
14 COVID vaccine molecule
15 Exactly when expected
16 Cereal box abbr.
17 "Come here often?", e.g.
19 Parking areas
20 Island off Montréal, Île-Sainte-___
21 Catch cunningly
23 i.e, in full
24 Rash of felonies
27 Udon's thinner cousin
29 No longer jiggly
30 Part of a pickleball court
31 Word after sacré or cordon
34 People with pull
36 Yes ___ (a little of both)
38 2024, on the Chinese calendar
42 Canadian footwear brand
43 "That's great!"
44 Male turkeys and orangutans
45 German masculine article
46 Some, in Somme
49 Boarding pass detail
51 Back-country skiing hazard
54 Command to a late sleeper
58 Totally hammered
59 "Seen it" shows
60 Sign prompting a studio audience
62 Where an off-road driver might be found?
64 Anger management topic
65 Invigorate, as a crowd
66 Mardi Gras city's nickname
67 Figure skating leap
68 This answer has three
69 What Jack's beanstalk did

Down

1 Prefix with theatre
2 Gave it a whirl
3 French 56-Down
4 Checks, and then checks again
5 Blockhead
6 Size up?: Abbr.
7 Better for luging
8 Certain Muslims
9 Rendezvous request
10 Newlywed's acquisition
11 Like rush-hour traffic
12 It has a bear-shaped lic. plate
13 Hockey shoot-out periods, for short
18 "... do ___ others"
22 Do blacktop upgrades
24 Defeatist's word
25 Cause of Cleopatra's death
26 British college jackets
28 Canadian singer ___ Naked
31 Via cargo ship
32 847-855 pope
33 Be on the payroll
35 Not quite enough, with "of"
37 Yakking nonstop
39 ___ the hills
40 Take the pressure off
41 Egg painting kit item
47 Missing nothing
48 Act parts
50 Became sharp, as cheese
52 Boutonniere's place
53 Sets with LCD screens
55 Struggling student's aide, maybe
56 John Candy film "___ Buck"
57 "Humbug!"
59 Crunch numbers?
60 Org. receiving many returns
61 Loose with the rules
63 Wall painter's choice

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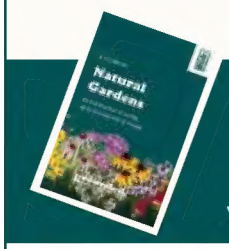

For a free guide to natural gardens in Haliburton County, visit groundedgardens.ca.

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